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THE PASSING OF A GREAT SUFI MASTER

Hazrat Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar (rahmatullahi alayh)

On Sunday 22 Rajab (2 June 2013) a great luminary on the firmament of Islamic Spirituality was lost to the Ummah: Aarif Billah, Hazrat Hakeem Muhammad Akhtar sahib (rahmatullahi alayh). The passing on of this great Wali of Allah leaves yet another vacuum in the lives of Muslims that shall never be filled. Rasoolullah ﷺ predicted that among the signs of Qiyaamat will be the passing away of Ulema and thereby, the removal of Knowledge from this world. I deem it appropriate to cite the whole hadith here.

“Verily Allah shall not take remove knowledge by snatching it out of the hearts of Ulema; instead knowledge shall disappear with the passing away of Ulema, until not a single Aalim will remain. Then people will take ignorant leaders (as guides). These ignoramuses shall issue iftaa without any knowledge. They will go astray and lead others astray as well.” *Mishkatul Masabeeh*

Aarif Billah Hazrat Moulana Shah Hakim Muhammad Akhtar (rahmatullahi alayh) is arguably one of the most influential Sufi Shaikhs of current times. Hazrat’s real name is Muhammad Akhtar but he was more popularly known as Hakim Akhtar because of a degree he held in Hikmat (Eastern Medicine), although Hazrat never reportedly operated a full time clinic or medical practice. Born in 1928 in the (then) undivided India, Hazrat was raised attending regular school and studied ‘Tib’ (Oriental Medicine) at A.K. Tibiyya College, Allahabad.

Since his early ages he had a natural inclination towards Tasowwuf and the Masnawi of Maulana Jalal al-Din Rumi (rahmatullahi alayh). Having a strong affiliation towards the Deobandi tradition of Islamic scholars and recognizing the importance of Tariqat in his youth, he traversed the path under the guidance of Maulana Shah Mohammad Ahmed Partab Garhi, Maulana Shah Abdul Ghani Phoolpoori, and latterly Maulana Shah Abrarul Haq (rahmatullahi alayhim).

Hazrat spent 17 years of his youth with Maulana Shah Abdul Ghani, his spiritual mentor, in the small Indian town of Azam Garh. Hazrat completed his formal Islamic studies during his stay with his Shaikh Hazrat Abdul-Ghani (rahmatullahi alayh). After the death of Shah Abdul Ghani he took bayt with Maulana Shah Abrarul Haq sahib (rahmatullahi alayhim). He was granted khilaafat (authority to initiate Mureeds) by his second mentor in the Spiritual Orders of Ashrafia, Chistiyyah, Naqshbandiyah, Qadiriyyah and Suharwardiyah.

Hazrat Hakim Muhammad Akhtar Saheb (rahmatullahi alayh) is the author of a large number of books on various subjects, but specialised in ‘Tasawwuf’ and the Ma’rifat or recognition of Allah Ta’ala. His commentary on the Masnawi Shareef of Moulana Jalalud-Deen Rumi (rahmatullahi alayh) has been hailed by great Ulama such as Moulana Yusuf Binori Saheb, Shaikh Zakaria Saheb, Moulana Manzoor

Nomani Saheb and Moulana Shah Abrarul Haq (rahmatullahi alayhim) (his own Shaikh), as a commentary that ignites the love of Allah Ta’ala and that has deep effect on the hearts of the readers.

He has thousands of Mureeds in Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, America, England, Canada, South Africa, Reunion and many other parts of the world. The spiritual benefit derived by those who spent some time in his company, sincerely desiring reformation, is clearly evident in their transformed lifestyles. The fact that great Ulama and many Ustaads of Hadith and Tafsir, who are themselves of a high spiritual rank, took the Bay’at at his hands, is a clear indication of his esteemed rank and profound knowledge of Deen.

Hazrat Moulana Hakim Muhammad Akhtar Saheb (rahmatullahi alayh) visited South Africa on two occasions, as well as many other countries of the world. His discourses were spiritually rejuvenating to both the young and the old, who flocked in large numbers to listen to his inspiring talks on various subjects.

Hazrat Hakeem sahib (rahmatullahi alayh) possessed mastery in composing poetry in the Urdu language that encapsulated the essence of Tasowwuf as well as other concepts of Quran and Sunnah. And that is not all; the poetry itself is inspirational and heart-rending. I believe this to be a clear sign of spiritual endowment from Almighty Allah. ❁

Q: What should a husband do if a wife beats him during an argument and what is her punishment?

A: In such a situation we suggest the husband makes sabr and not retaliate. He can reprimand the wife and threaten to retaliate with force if she does it again. If this threat has no effect then he should threaten her with talaq, and finally, give her one talaq if she does not refrain from beating him.

It is a major sin for the wife to lift her hands on the husband. Allah becomes displeased with her and if she dies without gaining the husband's forgiveness, she dies under the curse of Allah.

But the husband should exercise restraint. He should not hit back unless the wife's attack is so severe that he needs to save himself from serious harm. Then he may use minimum force.

Allah make it easy for both parties and bring about harmony in the marriage.

Q: How does a pilot pray salah, how is the timing done and which way would he face whilst flying?

A: The pilot should offer his salaah according to the times of the country over which he is flying. Alternately, if he can observe the sunrise and sunset, then the Fajr and Maghrib can be offered accordingly. As for Eshaa salaah, this can be done later in the evening if it is an overnight flight. Asr salaah time can be judged by the setting sun, so he will offer Asr when he notices the sun moving towards the horizon.

If he cannot move from his seat then he will face the direction his plane is flying. In such a case, the condition of facing Qiblah is waived. Otherwise he should get up and offer salaah somewhere in the plane where he is able to face Qiblah, even if it means sitting down to read the salaah.

Q: My wife is a revert to Islam. At the time that we were married she was still legally married to her kafir ex-husband from whom she had been separated for years. She had never obtained an actual legal divorce. A few weeks ago I pronounced talaq, as I am unable to even touch her knowing that she is married to someone else.

My questions are these:

1. Are we actually married Islamically?
2. Is her dowry valid and is she entitled to it, given that she still chose to remain married to someone else?

A: According to the Law of Islam when a woman embraces Islam her nikah with a non-Muslim husband automatically breaks, even without the kaafir husband issuing a talaq. However, before she can remarry a Muslim this woman has to separate from her kaafir husband and spend an iddat of three haidh after which she will be free to marry. Therefore, if you married her after this iddat period then your nikah to her was valid and binding. There was no need to issue a talaq.

As for the court divorce, that is of no consequence in Islam. Assuming this woman was still living with her kaafir husband then even if a court divorce was processed, it would still be haraam to marry her since she had not passed the mandatory iddat. We therefore advise not to worry about the court divorce. Your nikah to her was valid if it took place after three menses. If you still wish to keep her in your nikah, you can revoke the talaq and take her back into your nikah. The dowry you agreed upon for her was valid and binding because your nikah was valid. She is, therefore, still entitled to it. I reiterate, your nikah to this woman was valid. There are no marital ties between her and her ex-husband. And Allah knows best

Q: Dear Moulana, Firstly, thank you for your answer on the prohibition of music in Islam. I indeed agree that some music may create hypocrisy and other evil things in the hearts of people, but I still have doubts about the permissibility of music. In fact, the following Hadith somehow proves that the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ allowed some types of music (those who do not cause evil to the heart).

From Bukhari Volume 2, Book 15, Number 70: Narrated Aisha radhiallahu anha:

Allah's Apostle ﷺ came to my house while two girls were singing beside me the songs of Buath (a story about the war between the two tribes of the Ansar, the Khazraj and the Aus, before Islam). The Prophet ﷺ lay down and turned his face to the other side. Then Abu Bakr radhiallahu anhu came and spoke to me harshly saying, "Musical instruments of Satan near the Prophet ﷺ?" Allah's Apostle ﷺ turned his face towards him and said, "Leave them." When Abu Bakr radhiallahu anhu became inattentive, I signaled to those girls to go out and they left. It was the day of Eid, and the black people were playing with shields and spears; so either I requested the Prophet ﷺ or he asked me whether I would like to see the display. I replied in the affirmative. Then the Prophet ﷺ made me stand behind him and my cheek was touching his cheek and he was saying, "Carry on! O Bani Ar-fida," till I got tired. The Prophet ﷺ asked me, "Are you satisfied (Is that sufficient for you)?" I replied in the affirmative and he told me to leave.

Furthermore: Narrated Abu Musa ؓ: "That the Prophet ﷺ said to him 'O Abu Musa! You have been given one of the musical wind-instruments of the family of David.' (Translation of Sahih Bukhari, Virtues of the Qur'an, Volume 6, Book 61, Number 568)"

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I would like to know your opinion about that. Would you please forgive me if I am asking too much, I am confused. It would be great if you could help.

A: Jazakallah for your follow up query. It is good that you brought forward your doubts and views on the issue.

Firstly, your statement in brackets "those who do not cause evil to the heart" is your own personal inference from the hadith of Bukhari. It is not mentioned anywhere in the hadith that the "music" here refers to that which does not cause evil to the heart. We need to be very careful not to draw our own inferences from the hadith unless such inference is endorsed and authenticated by qualified Ulema.

Secondly, the hadith of Bukhari you quoted above makes mention of a particular instrument that has defined uses and is confined in its use. Furthermore, that hadith actually tells us that musical instruments ARE indeed haraam. Let me explain the second point first. When Abubakr (radhiyallahu anhu) exclaimed in astonishment "musical instruments of satan by the Messenger ﷺ!" it tells us quite clearly that the Sahaaba had already learnt that musical instruments were haraam. If Hazrat Abubakr radhiyallahu anhu had not heard this from Allah's Messenger ﷺ, how could he have known that musical instruments were haraam? Whatever knowledge the Sahaaba possessed came from the Messenger of Allah ﷺ. There was no previous Shariah from which they could have learnt. So it means that the understanding and prevalent belief among the Companions was that music and instruments of music were haraam. This explains the sudden and impulsive reaction of Hazrat Abubakr radhiyallahu anhu. However, when the Messenger of Allah ﷺ commanded him to leave those girls and what they were doing, the Sahaaba understood that *that* par-

ticular instrument was excluded from the prohibition.

This brings us to the first point I made, i.e. the particular instrument used in this incident. The Ulema say that the instrument referred to in this hadith was the DUFF. This is a one-sided drum which was used during times of war, or to announce a nikah, or by public announcers in the olden days to draw people's attention. This drum was also used by the Arabs during their festive occasions when reciting poetry. The Bukhari hadith thus tells us that the duff is permissible, thus excluding it from other musical instruments. Why was it excluded? The authentic and reputed commentators on hadith say the duff was excluded because it is not actually a musical instrument designed to create melody. Its purpose was mainly for publicizing events like nikah and state announcements, or to create noise at the time of battle.

Therefore, these Ulema go on to say that the duff will only be permissible if used by children when singing lawful nazms, nasheeds, and qaseedas, since this is exactly what happened in the hadith. So the use of the duff, because it is an exception, must be confined to the use that appears in this hadith. It cannot be extended to other usages, like adults singing songs while playing the drum, nor shall other musical instruments be likened or compared to it, and it will be allowed only on the occasions that the hadith mentioned such as Eid day, nikah, and war. It is, therefore, not possible to use the Bukhari hadith as a basis for allowing any sort of music.

Regarding the hadith of Abu Musa radhiyallahu anhu that you quoted, the translation rendered is totally incorrect. The Arabic phrase used in the hadith is : مَزَامِيرَ آلِ دَاوُدَ : Mazaameer is plural for Mizmaar, and mizmaar means a melodious voice, as mentioned by Imam Nawawi and other Scholars. This is not a musical wind instrument as the

translation you rendered portrays. If it meant musical instrument then it would mean that Abu Musa possessed some form of musical instrument, and this is necessarily and blatantly false. In fact The Messenger of Allah ﷺ was referring to his melodious voice when reciting Quran. So this hadith has nothing to do with any musical instruments at all.

In summary music has been declared haraam in the Quran and Hadith because it is an act invented and promoted by Shaytaan, like khamr and gambling, etc.

Q: Does a lady have to wear an abaaya (cloak) or can you just wear loose clothing? It doesn't say anywhere in Quran or hadeeth to wear a abaaya; it just says wear loose clothing, so what is right? Also can you wear a suit to work (females) with a scarf and are you allowed to become an air hostess?

A: Let me first rectify your incorrect observation on the mention of "loose clothing" in the Quran. The Quran makes no mention of "loose clothing". There is nothing of this sort in the Holy Quran. Instead, the Quran commands the women to wear the jilbaab. The Jilbaab is a huge outer garment or cloak that covers the entire body from head to toe. (See Sura 33, verse 59) This is the correct mode of dress for a woman when leaving home.

Wearing a suit is not permissible for it is a kaafier fashion and does not serve to hide the shape of the body. Instead it accentuates the female shape.

It is haraam to work as an air hostess.

Q: I had given my wife a talaag (divorce) on the request of her solicitors. I had written her a talaag and sent it to her after her solicitors said they were worried I would not give her an Islamic divorce. It has now been almost two

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years and the supposed iddat period has passed, but she is adamant that she did not request a talaq, rather it was her solicitors who did. Does this mean that we are still married and she is telling me the truth? If talaq was issued, and this was the first talaq, after the two years, does she have to do halala and marry another man prior to returning to me? Or can we just do a fresh nikah (marriage)?

A: Even if she did not request the Talaq, by you pronouncing the talaq it was valid and binding. So one Talaq has taken place and the Iddat is also over.

If you wish to reconcile, a new Nikah has to be made, with a new Mahr. There is no need for Halaalah. After remarrying her you still have two Talaqs left.

Q: I am in a very disturbed state of mind. I am in a relationship with a guy for nearly 5 years now. My mother knows about him so do his parents but getting married at this stage is not possible because the boy is not well established. But I am afraid of Allah's wrath and don't want to continue with this haram (forbidden) relationship anymore. The guy proposes doing secret nikah (getting married) and not disclosing it to anyone. Is it permissible in Islam? But I am afraid what if any one comes to know about it.

A: Since you are in a haraam relationship, it is waajib for you to marry this boy. Since you are a Hanafi, you will be allowed to make

nikah to him without the consent of your wali. We, therefore, advise that instead of making a private nikah, which is unethical and ill-advised, inform your mother and family about your intentions to marry even without their consent. Then make it a public nikah. Don't worry about how established the boy is. Once nikah is done, he will be forced to take over the responsibility of nikah. Also remember that according to other mazhabs a nikah without the consent of the father is not valid.

Q: I will be going to do Umrah with my wife and have found out she is pregnant. The problem is she is bleeding/brown discharge at the moment. From her previous experience this has lead to a miscarriage. Is she allowed to perform umrah as normal as I believe this is not menstruation? Please can you give me the ruling on this as I am confused and not able to find anything regarding this matter with pregnancy bleeding.

A: Bleeding during pregnancy is not regarded as menstruation. In that case the laws of Istihaadhah will apply. That means the woman will make a fresh wudhu for each salaah. She is allowed to perform Umrah in this state. The wudhu she makes for the new salaah will suffice for her tawaaf of Umrah as long as it is made within that salaah time.

Q: I'm happy to know that it's permissible to delay an obligatory ghusl (bath) after sex-

ual intercourse. The reason is I'm living with my in laws and when I go to the kitchen early morning it gets quite late to complete all the work and come back. So it becomes afternoon by the time I finish all my work and get ready to take a bath. I hope is it allowed without any conditions? Also I would like to know if its ok to have sex more than one time during the day or night without taking a ghusl bath? Please let me know. Also please let me know if its okay to fall asleep without taking wudhu after intercourse.

A: The main factor to consider when delaying a Ghusl is that it must not cause salaah to become qadha. If you are missing your Fajr salaah or zuhr salaah because of being in an unclean state, then this is haraam and sinful.

Sexual intercourse more than once without a Ghusl in-between is permissible. However, at least make wudhu between two rounds of sexual intercourse.

Sleeping without Wudhu after intercourse is also permissible.

Q: My child sometimes vomits and urinates on surfaces at home (e.g tile/wooden flooring, leather couches, tables, etc). I have been wiping the surfaces with a cloth 3 times, rinsing the cloth each time. Please can you let me know if this is fine and if the surfaces I mentioned are paak (ritually clean).

A: The surfaces (tiles, wood, leather) you mentioned may be purified by pouring water over the soiled area thrice and soaking up the water each time. After soaking up the water once, rinse the cloth or mop three times before soaking the water again, or else use a clean cloth for each soak-up. ❀

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